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ABSTRACT

This paper describes and reports on the evaluation of aspects of three preschool programs in the Bidwell Community School, New South Wales, Australia. A home based preschool program, a sessional preschool-centered program, and a mixed, part sessional and part home-based program were made available for children and their parents. With the aim of identifying outcomes associated with varying degrees of parental involvement, evaluation activities were focused on the extent and quality of parental involvement in the programs and on some aspects of the children's development. Data were collected across three school terms through (1) teacher rating schedules on child/mother behavior; (2) teacher interviews with mothers about program expectations; (3) teachers' impressions of mothers' participation over the three term period; and (4) extended interviews with mothers. Further, teachers' perceptions of children's characteristics on six dimensions were recorded. Among the results, mothers rated the preparation for school function of the preschool as their major concern. Changes in teachers' perceptions of individual children over the school-year indicate that teachers felt that some progress had been made in socializing the children. Mothers of children in the mixed program noted a higher developmental level in their children than did other mothers. Appended materials consist of program planning and evaluation documents. (Author/RH)

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PROJECT EVALUATION REPORT

Report on the Evaluation of Bidwill Community

School's Preschool Programs 1979

Muriel Healey

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This draft paper reports specific aspects of evaluation activities not presented in detail in the Project's Final Report. Comments or requests for further information may be addressed to the Project, care of the above address.

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Preface

In 1979 the new buildings for the Bidwill Community School were completed. The Principal and Infants' Mistress wanted to take the opportunity to initiate and evaluate new alternative provisions for preschool aged children. Muriel Healey who was the Project's Program Assistant associated with the school, volunteered to help implement and evaluate the new initiatives. The following presents her report on some aspects of the programs developed in 1979.

While the report does not form an integral part of the overall Project evaluation, it does present some insight into some of the roles the Project personnel willingly undertook.

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A. INTRODUCTION

The opening of the new buildings at Bidwill Community School enabled the school administration to consider alternative ways of providing educational programs for the children under five. As well as catering for the demand for sessional preschool programs, Departmental approval was obtained for the development of alternative programs. Consequently three alternative preschool programs were made available for children and their parents. They were:-

- . Home-based preschool program
- . Sessional preschool-centred program
- . Mixed Program being part sessional, part home-based.

Appendix A details program objectives and procedures.

These three programs were originally intended to start at the beginning of the academic year in 1979. However while the development of the programs proceeded smoothly, their implementation did not. The first problem concerned meeting parents' needs and wishes. Despite two public meetings, one at the end of Term 3 1978, the other at the beginning of Term 1 1979, it was difficult to assess the attitudes of the parents who would be involved in the pre-school program and to be able to fully inform them of the offerings which would be available. A second problem involved the use of resources. It was evident that the use of premises, storage space and ancillary staff was not being equally shared among the three programs, with the Mixed program tending to be disadvantaged. There were also delays in the arrival of equipment for the sessional activities until the end of Term 1 which meant that only the Home Based and Mixed programs could begin before the middle of the term.

Yet as so often happens a bonus flowed from the administrative difficulties. The delay in the arrival of the new equipment meant that the sessional teachers were able to get out into the community to meet the parents and it also enabled the parents to get to know the teachers in a more informal way. This later enabled a softer transition from school to home to occur. Nevertheless the frustrations were immense and only the Mixed and Home Based programs were able to start before the middle of first term.

As the year progressed the original intention of keeping the three programs running as separate entities was somewhat modified. The expressed need of parents in the Mixed program for 'real' activities and not 'playgroup' activities saw the involvement of children enrolled in the Mixed program, in some of the activities of the Sessional program. The parents viewed the difference between preschool and playgroup activities as one where the former had a greater degree of structure present in the activities, and allowed a greater degree of flexibility on the mother's part, to absent herself from time to time. While this 'sharing' of activities was originally considered by teachers, it was originally thought to be too administratively difficult to implement. Subsequent experiences dispelled these fears and the sharing of activities became an accepted part of the Mixed program's activities.

An additional point worth noting about the implementation of the programs concerns the stresses and strains of establishing a new school. The Infants' Mistress was expected to provide leadership and support

for the establishment of the programs, yet it was difficult for her to devote sufficient time to the added administrative and educational duties imposed upon her by the introduction of the programs and settling into the new school. It is essential that she received additional support for inservice education and the special programming necessary for catering for individual families. Experiments are always performed at a high risk when administrative change is occurring and when teachers, parents and children are adjusting to a new environment.

EVALUATION ACTIVITIES

When the programs were first established it was decided to concentrate the evaluation on the extent and quality of parental involvement in the programs and some aspects of the children's development. This decision was made as it was one of the primary objectives of the school and data on the more traditional outcomes of preschool education were gathered previously. Conceptually it was hoped to determine the outcomes associated with varying degrees of parental involvement within the three programs. Theoretically the Home-Based program should have had the greatest degree of parental involvement followed by the Mixed and Sessional programs. However subsequent practices clearly showed that the attitudes and enthusiasms of the teachers in all programs were the important factors affecting parental involvement and not the clear-cut programmatic structures.

At the beginning of the study it was believed essential to collect data on the home backgrounds of the families and their expectations in enrolling their children in any of the programs. However the attempt to gather physical and behavioural data in the homes was abandoned as the school administrators rightly felt that the new teachers were not sufficiently comfortable in their roles to administer the instrument without embarrassment to the families. However eighty-two mothers in the Sessional and Mixed programs were questioned about their expectations though the small number enrolled in the Home-Based program made comparisons difficult. Therefore the data represent information gathered on the Sessional and Mixed programs.

EVALUATION PROCEDURES

To collect data about children's development and the extent and quality of parental involvement generated by the three programs, teachers, aides and parents were interviewed and the teachers completed rating schedules. A further set of data on mother/child interactions within the programs, were collected but the results are not included in this report.

Specifically, data were collected according to the following schedule -

By Teachers and Aides

First day of enrolment - rating schedules on child/mother behaviour.

During term 1 - interviews with mothers about program expectations (See Appendix B)

End of terms 1 & 3 - impressions of mother's participation over period.

By Research Assistants

During term 2 - interviews with mothers (See Appendix B)

The information sought in these instruments reflected areas of information the school considered desirable to have for their future plans.

EVALUATION RESULTS

1. First day reports.

Teachers were asked to record their impressions of 'first-day' behaviours of mothers and children, in the following four categories -

Mother came (yes/no)
Quality of mother's participation (Rated 0-4)
Child was wanting to come (yes/no)
Child was able to separate from mother (yes/no)

From this rating schedule the data indicated that 72 percent of the total number of mothers came to the pre-school, 79 percent of the children were willing to come and 54 percent of the children were unwilling to separate early from their mothers. The teachers' mean rating of the quality of mother's participation in the day's activities was 1.7 on the five point scale used.

2. Parental expectations of programs

Data collected by teachers during term 1 on parental expectations yielded the following.

(a) Reason for selecting the particular program:

Table 1 shows the ranking of the reasons given over all programs in the preschool in 1979.

Table 1 Reasons for program selection (open question)

Rank Order	Reason I		Reason II	
1	Best for him (her)	21%	To mix with other children	11%
2	Prepare for school	17%	Best for him (her)	8.5%
3	To mix with other children	10%		
4	(Mother can only manage (part time	8.5%	46% had only one reason.	
equal	(			
4	(Child can only manage (part time.	8.5%		

(b) Specific expectations:

Twelve alternatives were given for mothers to consider under the question "Do you think preschool should ...?" Table 2 lists them in order of rank from 82 interviews.

Table 2. Expectations of Preschool by Mothers ranked in order of frequency.

Preschool should ...	Preschool should not do this	(As percentages)			Preschool should definitely do this.
	0	1	2	3	4
1. Prepare child to get along at school	1	0	9	21	70
2. Be fun	0	4	13	18	65
3. Help him to get used to being away from mother	4	5	15	22	54
4. Make him confident in himself	5	1	28	20	46
5. Help me to learn how to teach him better at home	10	6	17	27	40
6. Teach him things like numbers and new words	13	20	21	15	30
7. Give me a chance to have a rest from being with him all the time	32	6	22	12	28
8. Improve his behaviour	28	12	22	15	23
9. Help me to understand him better	24	15	30	12	20
10.5 Teach him to concentrate)	15	12	24	32	17
10.5 Help sort out any problems)	24	15	28	16	17
12. Give him more atten- tion than he has now	54	11	12	5	6

When asked further eighty percent of parents believed that all children should go to preschool if they could. Those who refrained from making this generalisation said it depended on the parent or on the child. The reasons given were similar to their own reasons for selecting preschool; to prepare the child for school and to help him socialise.

The parental expectation responses were analysed using multivariate analysis of variance procedures. The intention was to see if there was any link between the choice of program and the other responses. Results were grouped by teacher, 1 and 2 in the Mixed, 3 and 4 in the Sessional programs. Only one significant result was found ($p < .001$). This related to the child's first day behaviour based on the question of whether the child separated from the mother. Teacher 4, one of the sessional teachers, recorded an extremely high level of separation of mother and child on the first day, 100% with girls and 77% with boys. Neither teacher 1 nor 2 in the Mixed program recorded higher than 44% and the lowest was 18% for the boys in teacher 1's program. It is suspected that this result reflected teacher rather than program influences.

There were no significant differences in expectations for pre-school for mothers who chose different programs. However trends are fairly strong on two of the items "help sort out any problems" and "give me a chance to have a rest from being with him all of the time". The mothers whose boys were enrolled in the Mixed group of teacher 1 rated "help in sorting out problems" above average while mothers of girls in the teacher 3 (Sessional) group rated this even higher. Otherwise the mean rating was less than 2 out of 4.

The other expectation of free time for mother was held at above average rating by mothers of boys in both Sessional programs and again mothers of boys in teacher 1's group (Mixed). This trend was more clearly sex oriented than program oriented. A trend more clearly program oriented was for the selection of item 1 "teach things like numbers and new words", uniformly a higher rating amongst Sessional than Mixed program mothers irrespective the child's sex.

3. Teachers' Impressions of Mothers' Participation.

At the end of term 1 and again at the end of term 3 the teachers and aides recorded their impressions of mothers and children. The purpose was to compare first and third term observations.

Over the whole group mothers' participation was rated in terms of frequency of attendance and quality of involvement. (See Table 3). These data do not represent all of the enrolments because owing to absences, late starting, departures and so on there were many parents and children for whom only one record was made. There were 88 sets of data collected.

Table 3: Comparison of mother's level of response (as perceived by teachers) in Terms 1 and 3.

how often	<u>Frequency</u>		<u>Quality</u> code	<u>Quality</u>	
	Term 1	Term 3		term 1	term 3
never	35	31	NA *	35	28
sometimes	26	21	1 (low)	7	5
often	27	36	2	12	16
			3	14	20
			4 (high)	20	19

*N A refers to the lack of opportunity to observe mother/child interaction due to non-attendance of mother.

In addition the children were rated on a set of eight bipolar adjectives. The reason for choosing this style of descriptor was that it forces the observer to consider each child in terms of a weighting towards one value or another. There was no middle rating. When only one adjective is responded to an observer may show a continuous bias to scoring at the high or the low end of the scale. This can still occur when bipolars are used, by the observer maintaining a position towards centre, but he/she is less likely to do this when one end of the scale is perceived as being more desirable than the other.

In a sense the set of observations supplies information about the teachers themselves because these are their perceptions. One teacher may value a behaviour which another does not value quite so much. For instance is it desirable for a child to be spontaneous in school or to be constrained, quiet or talkative?

Table 4 shows how the group data compared in first and third terms on each pair of descriptors (n=88). There is a shift towards the value "independent" as might be expected and it is at the extreme. Observations on the dimension "easily hurt" to "thick-skinned" tend to be bunched around the centre. Most of the change occurs at rating 5 which is strengthened in term 3 in nearly every case. It should be noted that the order of presentation of the pairs of adjectives in the table is not representative of the order given to teachers. They have been converted for this table with the more highly regarded descriptor at the right.

Table 4: Ratings on individual dimensions --- raw data
(first and third terms)

dimension	1	2	3	4	5	6	dimension
dependent	1	2	7	4	13	10	12 7 33 29 22 36 independent
timid	4	2	15	13	13	12	17 15 19 28 20 18 assertive
restless	7	4	6	7	16	17	19 10 26 32 14 18 calm
constrained	2	0	11	10	15	13	13 16 27 34 20 15 spontaneous
easily hurt	7	3	19	15	18	18	16 15 22 25 6 12 thick-skinned
quiet	6	4	7	11	12	13	11 7 24 28 28 25 talkative
unfriendly	0	0	2	4	9	9	11 15 30 35 36 25 friendly
unresponsive	0	1	5	6	6	4	18 12 33 36 26 29 responsive

Differences among observations of individuals by different teachers

Contingency tables were drawn up by Crosstabs Program (SPSS 1977) after computing the differences between first and third term observations. Since some of these were negative integers a constant was added before table preparation. It was still possible to take a central reading of the bipolarised dimensions of behaviour on the contingency tables and to observe the trends in either direction.

Both sets of observations were analysed in terms of mothers' frequency and quality of involvement and children's characteristics as observed by teachers.

a) Mothers' involvement

(i) quantity of involvement.

According to teacher observations the frequency of parent attendance at preschool sessions followed these trends:

teacher 1 (Mixed) a clear increase of attendance (N observations 16)

teacher 2 (Mixed) no change (N = 17)

teacher 3 (Sessional) no change (N= 22)

teacher 4 (Sessional) some increase but with the majority no change (N = 29)

(ii) Quality of mother involvements:

teacher 1 ... increase (+ index) = 30/16 change index computed from
teacher 2 ... decrease (- index) = 7/17 * sum of difference over
teacher 3 ... increase (+ index) = 3/22 the total N of observations
teacher 4 ... decrease (- index) = 8/29 in each group.
+ve and -ve values cancel
each other out to some degree.

2. Children's characteristics as observed by teachers.

Table 5 summarises the teacher's perceptions about children's characteristics on a number of dimensions.

The most unusual set of differences between first and third term is in teacher two's observations. Most of these can be explained by a change in staff in the middle of the year and are marked by an asterisk.

Table 5 Sum of amount of change in observations along six child dimensions.

Dimension	Increase (amount)*				Decrease (amount)				no change			
	Teachers				Teachers				Teachers			
	T1	T2	T3	T4	T1	T2	T3	T4	T1	T2	T3	T4
independent/ dependent	11	4*	19	21	4	10	1	10	7	2	4	7
assertive/ timid	6	11	11	21	7	12	6	8	5	4	8	15
calm/restless	20	8	8	22	5	13	12	11	3	5	8	11
thickskinned/ hurt	11	14	12	32	1	6	17	10	8	6	7	8
spontaneous/ const.	12	1*	31	17	11	24	4	10	4	4	4	8
talkative/ quiet	8	2	10	17	5	18	5	12	9	6	13	14
friendly/ unfriendly	7	0	16	9	11	21	8	10	3	7	7	12
responsive/ unresponsive	8	4	20	15	6	19	1	12	5	4	9	9

* Refers to the adjective which is mentioned first.

4. The Mother Interview (See Appendix B)

During second term a random sample of 62 mothers was invited to participate in an extended interview with a research assistant from Macquarie University. The purpose of the interview was threefold.

- a) to obtain the mothers' impressions of the preschool experiences of her child in her own words,
- b) to have her rate a number of values for herself and for the child on a scale 1-5,
- c) to involve her in an evaluation of her child's vocabulary, classification and problem solving.*

(a) Impressions of the Preschool experience.

First the mother of each child was interviewed and asked about the child's enjoyment of preschool and rate of attendance. Reasons were asked if the mother reported either a high rate of absence or a negative view of preschool. There were few of the latter but some mothers of children in the Mixed program expressed the view that it had taken some time for the atmosphere and teacher routines to settle down and that the child was not happy at first. Those mothers who were critical of the early stages expressed their approval of the way things were at that time.

One or two mothers found the time routine unsatisfactory either because of their own habits (it's too early in the morning) or because their husband's shift work pre-empted his involvement with the children after school.

Reasons given for absence were illness in the main, but there were several references to family problems which caused the parents to visit agencies at specific times when child care would have been desirable.

The next question referred to changes in the child. Twenty of the 62 mothers thought that their child had benefitted greatly from preschool. Thirty eight said that their child had been helped "quite a lot" and only four said "only a little". The ways in which they said their children had changed were many and various but they seemed to belong to five developmental areas, with some overlap (eg. "less shy" has been included in self attitude development rather than in growth to independence). The five areas were maturity (independence), calmness and concentration on tasks, learning, self-attitudes and compliance with adult expectations.

All of the mothers gave one reason for their belief that their child had benefitted and 51 gave two. Both responses were coded. Overall, mothers mentioned change in terms of maturity or independence 18 times, being more outgoing 9 times. In 13 cases mothers referred

* The interchange in section 3 was taped so that transcripts could be analysed. Data from this interview are not included in this report.

to their child's increased interest in things, improved span of attention or growth of intelligence. Actual learning of various sorts was mentioned 38 times (formal, language, speech, song or verse, creative activity). In 23 cases improvement in self attitudes were mentioned. In 11 cases the improvement was in play attitudes and the remainder were either positive or negative examples of increased harmony (eg. happier, less moody). Finally management or compliance was referred to by 8 mothers in various ways such as "more responsible" "better attitude towards others", "helpful", "tidy".

When asked what was the "best" thing that had happened to their child at preschool twenty mothers gave multiple answers of three items, 44 gave two or more and all gave at least one. These were similar responses but with a slight shift of emphasis towards feelings rather than learnings. Behaviour towards others was mentioned in terms of considerateness, sharing, enjoyment. The best thing was making friends or mixing with other children in 23 cases and being better behaved in play with children in 16 cases. Increased happiness or decreased negative attitude was mentioned 18 times, greater activity or ability to amuse oneself was mentioned by 9 mothers, attentiveness by 6 mothers and independence by 10 mothers.

Some mothers also described their own gains eg. "more time to myself" "doesn't cling to me", "enjoys doing cooking and other things in the home". Altogether there were 22 such references. Management was mentioned in terms of awareness of routines by the child in 7 cases. Learning was mentioned as the best thing by only 7 mothers. Five mothers spontaneously referred to the child's fondness for the teacher or his enjoyment of the sessions or visits as the best thing.

(b) Comparison between programs: "ways of development" and "best things"

When the data were regrouped so that we could compare responses of mothers in the two Sessional programs with responses of mothers in the two Mixed programs there were only slight differences which might be attributed to different program emphases. For example "plays better with siblings and others" was one of the descriptions of the way their child had changed proffered by 9 (27%) of the Sessional mothers interviewed. Only two of the Mixed program mothers gave this explanation for change. Both groups of parents said that gains in maturity or independence were aspects of the change and increased outgoingness was again experienced by more than one fifth of the mothers in each group. Both groups referred to gains in school related learnings (numbers, colours etc) in about 30% of instances, but mothers in the Mixed program claimed changes in speech and language more often than in the Sessional (24% of 29 vs 15% of 33 i.e. a difference of 2 cases in a slightly smaller sample).

The question about "best things that have happened" asked the mothers to place a value judgment upon their child's experiences. The most popular value choice was "making friends" or "learning to mix with others" (45% or 15 citations by Sessional mothers, 38% (11) by mothers in the Mixed program). The next was expressed as "independence" or "occupies himself" or "responsible" and was evident in slightly more of the responses of Sessional mothers once again (21% vs 17%). The following values were expressed by mothers of sessional children but not by any in the Mixed program - "shares", "not bored" "better attitudes to most things" (by 4 mothers in each case), and strangely enough

"does kitchen activities, or cooking or sweeping" was mentioned by 3 of the sessional mothers but no others. What were the responses which were found more frequently in the Mixed program? They included "attends", "listens to a story", "thinks", "actively does things" which together accounted for 8 responses (28% of mothers) in the Mixed group but only 3 (9%) amongst Sessional mothers. Two response types which occurred only in the Mixed program (3 times) were "loves his teacher" and "has given him the company of other children" (3). More of the Mixed program mothers expressed the value "has something enjoyable to look forward to" (4 vs 2) but this may have arisen from the fact that their children had more time at home to reflect on preschool and to look forward to the next session. On the other hand more of the Sessional mothers could and did claim that "preschool gives the mother more time to herself" (7 cases or 21% vs 3 or 10%).

These contrasts indicate that the mothers have similar values on the whole. It is interesting however that the learning skills (attending, listening, and occupying self) are part of the awareness of mothers in the Mixed program more often than the Sessional. Slight evidence indeed, but perhaps indicators of the fact that a few mothers are becoming more involved in the learning process. Sessional mothers, and mothers in the Mixed program also, often talked about things their children had learned, but this tended to be an expression of satisfaction that preschool had served its proper purpose, of preparing children for school.

It might be stretching the point to say that a description "has given him the company of other children" is evidence of a softer look at the development of social skills than "mixes better" or "is more outgoing", but I suspect that there is something in these finer points which shows different perceptions of mothers as their children grow. I would like to think it shows something of a process orientation.

(c) Comparison between programs: "worst" things

Mothers were given the opportunity to express negative feeling by being asked what was the worst thing that had happened. Although 17 mothers indicated negative results of some kind, only 4 mothers gave more than one indication of unhappiness with preschool. Five mothers claimed that the child was cheekier, two that he or she was naughtier and two mentioned teacher difficulties earlier in the year.

In the category of "worst things" the chief program difference was that Sessional mothers found 12 different ways of describing the negatives, the others only 5. The only responses given by more than one mother in each group were "cheekier" (Sessional 3 cases, Mixed 2) and "naughtier" (Sessional, 2). The other complaints by Sessional mothers included "thinks he can make his own decisions" "gets called names by other children", "started swearing", "won't stop talking or singing at home", "very domineering", "noisier", "change in teachers", "doesn't get to see his father" (shift work), "difficult at home when he can't come to school" and finally "mother anxious" (about child being called names).

Mothers of the Mixed program gave these reasons - "inappropriate behaviour (cutting up books at home not meant for this purpose)", "change in teacher", "too early in the morning for mother" and "embarrassed because she wet her pants".

(d) Mothers' evaluations of preschool for themselves and their child

The list of values for the child were taken from the spontaneous statements of Home Base mothers in 1977 when asked what home teaching should have done for their child. On this occasion the mothers were asked to give the values a numerical rating. A rating of 5 meant "very much", the rating 1 meant "no". The middle values represented "a little", "quite a bit" and "a lot". We did not ask the mothers to rate whether preschool had prepared their child for school but school adjustment skills were listed more specifically in items like "to be more cooperative with adults" and "to learn new words". Table 6 shows the rank order of the ratings.

Table 6 Mother Interview: Rank order of mother's ratings for her child.

Value of Preschool	Rating of groups (N=62)					Rank	mean rating
	1	2	3	4	5		
learned songs							
rhymes	1	3	12	16	30	1	4.15
made friends	1	8	9	26	18	2	3.84
more independent	3	5	10	26	18	3	3.82
recognises colour							
shapes	2	12	13	29	6	5	3.4
plays imaginatively	8	8	14	15	17	5	3.4
communicates	5	6	21	19	11	5	3.4
learned new words	4	14	15	14	15	7	3.34
counts	9	8	14	16	15	8	3.32
cooperates with							
adults	13	13	17	13	6	9	2.77
concentrates,							
finishes	11	16	19	10	6	10	2.74
talks about							
feelings	25	13	8	9	7	11	2.55

Table 7. Mother Interview: Rank order of mother's ratings for own values

Value of Preschool	Rating of group (N=62)					Rank	mean rating
	1	2	3	4	5		
Understand child							
more	10	10	15	16	11	1	3.13
met new friends	11	14	13	14	10	2	2.95
feel I have some-	7	16	20	10	9	3.5	2.94
thing to contribute							
understand							
others more	11	10	20	14	7	3.5	2.94
am more patient							
with child	11	17	13	12	9	5	2.86
have more time	20	8	13	12	9	6	2.7
interest outside							
the home	23	5	14	13	7	7	2.6
sort out any							
problems	35	11	7	3	6	8	1.94

In addition the data were analysed by multivariate analyses of variance to see whether the mother's association with a particular teacher affected her evaluation or whether the sex of the child was a significant factor. Only one test reached significance ($p < 0.1$). This related to the interaction of teacher effects with effects of the sex of the child. Two of the items in particular reflected these effects - "plays imaginatively" and "talks about feelings". Very high responses to the former were given by mothers of boys in two of the teacher groups (one Sessional and one Mixed program) and for the girls in another (Mixed) group. The last teacher was also associated with the highest mean rating on the second item "talks about feelings" from mothers of girls. Either this teacher (teacher 2) related particularly well to girls or else this small group (6 girls) is atypical.

Teacher 1 and teacher 4 were associated with high ratings for "expresses feelings". Teacher 1 effects were consistent over boys and girls so these responses did not contribute to the significant interaction. However teacher 4 was associated with the second highest rating on this item by mothers of boys and the lowest for girls. The question directed to the mothers next was "Has your child's going to preschool helped you ...?"

The rank order of mothers' gains for self are shown in Table 7. There were no significant effects of either teacher or sex of child on these responses. The mothers of the girls in the teacher 2 group maintain a consistently high rating for themselves with one exception. They did not rate highly "to have more time". However mothers in the Mixed program tended generally to rate "have an interest outside home" more highly than Sessional mothers did. In some cases their involvement at school went beyond rostered assistance or voluntary attendance to membership of special interest groups. Sessional mothers tended to rate more highly "to have more time".

Discussion of Results

The data collection shows that the mothers who enrolled their children at Bidwill Preschool in 1979 were not very different from mothers in five different experimental programs in Mt. Druitt in 1977. They had similar expectations and ranked preparation for school as their major concern. On the whole they were a little uncertain about what the choice of program might mean especially since the school administration did not supply a clear set of descriptors nor provide any guidance to parents about the ways in which children's needs might best be served. However there is some reflection of the values promoted by Home Base over two years in the relatively high ranking of the expectation "help me to learn how to teach him better at home" (rank 5 of 12).

Mothers' expectations and teachers' views of parent involvement.

A minority expressed a clear choice for the Mixed program by giving their reason for selection either "mother can only manage part time" or "child can only manage part time".

Generally there was a low expectation for preschool to help sort out problems, provide extra attention or teach concentration. Most parents felt that socialisation was the objective of preschool (it was not included in the items because it was already known to us). This was often the reason underlying the expression "It's best for him/her" (Table 1).

In the Sessional rooms where teacher and aide worked together to record observations they generally discussed together what their rating might be. The significant difference between teachers in their judgments about mother and child separating on their first day is interesting. Home Base teachers do not expect mother and child to separate in this situation. They expect a more relaxed approach with the mother feeling accepted, not guilty about her natural wish to be with her child. A mother who is anxious to leave is often full of fear about her child's adjustment without her. Since she feels insecure herself she prefers to be absent. Sometimes there is a fear of criticism and this is derived from the history in our schools of mothers being asked to leave because their child is misbehaving (i.e. crying).

The most natural process is like a weaning period which varies in length for different mother and child pairs. Some confident parents have accomplished this before preschool begins, but most have not. The new situation is likely to arouse some uncertainties in most children. The teacher sets the pace in this matter. Parents who do not feel morally obliged to leave can indulge in the natural concerns that mothers have for their children in new situations. The confident teacher will help such mothers discover their child's strengths gradually and at the same time feel confident about the whole schooling process.

Traditionally classrooms are not the place for mothers to be. As a result of this tradition the majority of mothers do not expect to spend much time in school. These mothers prefer to enrol their children in whole day sessions and hand over any problems to the teacher. They would be honest if they said they expected that preschool should give them more time to themselves for their own affairs, which should be accepted by teachers.

In the context of the first term of the new preschool there might have been too much pressure on mothers to stay during the school based activities of the Mixed groups.

One of the reasons for this was the lack of assistance to teachers in this program. The fact that they were sharing a room with two other teachers, had no school supplies for sessional activities, and had less time than they would have wished with the children in groups, meant that they felt the pressure to accomplish much in the very short time space of two half day sessions. While they would have encouraged mothers not to separate too early from their children it should have been possible for them to come and go more freely to group activities, knowing that they would see the teacher during her fortnight home visit and would be able to discuss with her any aspect of learning and development which concerned them. However, mothers were at first pressed into service when there were so many new children.

Another difficulty was that the children would not have consolidated any piece of learning in two half days and that it would have been forgotten by next week had not the mother been present. On the other

hand the teachers in this Mixed program also felt that they could not organise things as they wished with too many mothers present. They needed at times to have the children to themselves to establish listening skills and daily routines. Mothers tended to be distractive. It was obvious that only a confident teacher can handle both mother and child at one time realising that the child will learn the new skills more easily with the mother as co-learner.

At midyear many of the mothers in the Mixed group appealed to me to consider the nature of the Mixed program. Some of these mothers were veterans of 1978 Home base, or their friends, and had expected something better. Their criticisms ranged from "It's too much like a playgroup and not enough like a preschool" to "The teacher is too soft with them. She is a lovely person but she is too soft." With other "sterner" models available the mothers' expectations of teacher "expertise" over mother capability, and of discipline and order rather than cooperation in learning were reinforced. The mothers were invited to attend a meeting to discuss these issues with the teachers and I was an interested observer and participant. Their comments were recorded. Two points were established -

1) They wished for more examples of learning of a sort not necessarily available at home such as learning appropriate songs and rhymes. This was a very reasonable request for the sharing of teacher know how.

2) They wished to see a more routinized or controlled group situation when they came. In this area of the children's lives they believed they knew best.

The reaction from the aides to their requests was interesting. They believed that teachers should not have to be exposed to criticism like this "after all their years of training". The teacher in question did not mind at all because she realised it was an opportunity to discuss with mothers various other styles of management than direct control, such as the growth towards independent responsibility through experience in decision making. In any case it is fundamental to the idea of professionalism that it should be able to answer critics. If a teacher cannot explain why she does certain things the chances are that there are no good reasons for doing them.

On this occasion the Mixed program teachers responded to the mothers' expressed needs and reorganisation of the Mixed programs followed. It made sense to the teachers that they should organise one larger group each with a greater degree of structure in its activities and then have more time for a less structured approach in the one to one home visit. Appreciation of the reorganisation was expressed directly by a few mothers and the teachers themselves responded by more positive feelings about their work.

In any case, over the year there was a greater rate and degree of parent involvement taking the four teacher groups as a whole. The quality of response varied in style and this could be observed by walking through the classrooms at any time. This was partly due to the teacher's own style of interaction with parents and partly due to parents' spontaneity or lack of it. When the environment was highly structured, as in the group of teacher 4, the more competent mothers and fathers seemed to relate better. When there was less structure, lonely and insecure mothers sometimes gained attention which was beneficial for them. However it was difficult for Sessional teachers

to have much knowledge of parents who did not attend, and I suspect that some children left because of our failure to meet the needs of some parents. It would be a very valuable experience for teachers in preschool and an interesting study in its own right, to investigate the reasons why children leave preschool. If we do not know then it is possible that we may be missing out on the prevention of later school failure.

Teacher perceptions of children in their groups.

It is clear from the changes in teacher perceptions of individual children over the year that they felt that some progress had been made in their socialisation. On the valued end of the bipolar dimensions there are increases in the number of ratings (Table 4) but these only reflect the teachers' impressions of their groups as a whole. In order to know whether change has been observed in individuals we must look at the differences between their ratings in term 1 and in term 3 (Table 5).

Three out of four teachers perceived a greater degree of independence in a number of children. Other observed increases are towards assertiveness (teacher 4) calmer behaviour (teachers 1 and 4) reduced sensitivity to hurt (teachers 1, 2) and greater spontaneity (teacher 3 in particular), friendliness (teacher 3) and responsiveness (teacher 3). The dimension "talkative to quiet" was the one in which teachers perceived the least degree of change; although teacher 4 reported relatively high gains in talkativeness she also reported gains in quietness. This variable and two others proved somewhat problematic for teachers in that they showed less agreement about which was the desired direction of change. In earlier observations (Metham 1978) it had seemed that teachers tended to work to accomplish valued end goals. Clearly independence is desirable rather than dependence. It is not so easy to decide whether it is desirable to have a quiet or a talkative child on the whole, except when the context dictates the choice. A teacher would value a change towards talkativeness in a shy child, but would also find pleasure in quiet moments with a talkative child. Neither the extremes of thick-skinned or easily hurt were valued goal behaviours although teachers would generally work to achieve a reduction of sensitivity in timid or shy children. Not all teachers would value spontaneity over constraint, even at this early age. Hence the observations are evidence of the teachers' viewpoints quite often. Also teachers themselves provide behaviour models. An assertive teacher might be expected to have at least some assertive children in her classroom. A sensitive teacher might reinforce spontaneity and model friendly approach.

The data from teacher 2 cannot be explained in this way. They are an artifact of staff and program change but they are interesting nevertheless. We cannot be sure how much of the difference in perceptions between two teachers who taught the same group during the year might be due to each one's values and how much due to change in the child. It seemed that the first term teacher was prepared to credit the children with a greater degree of independence, spontaneity and responsive behaviour than the third term teacher. There may also have been some real changes due to a different quality of response to the teacher. One additional factor is that 3 of the first term children had transferred to a Sessional program in the middle of the

year and their final observation was made by neither of these teachers, but by a third, one of the Sessional teachers. The observations would be made in relation to a different group and by a teacher with her own set of values which might differ from either of the others.

Interviews with Mothers in Term 2

It was perhaps too early in the year to ask mothers about how much preschool had helped their child. However this was the only time available for the interviews. The mothers did have more informed views of preschool already and their undirected comments revealed values which showed that they were thinking beyond some of their earlier school oriented reasons for enrolling.

Mothers of children in the Mixed program noted a higher developmental level in their children than other mothers. Also the majority of spontaneous comments reflecting an appreciation of attitudes appropriate for learning were provided by mothers of the Mixed programs. When asked to describe the ways in which their children had developed "improved concentration" by 5 in the Mixed versus 1 in the Sessional, "improved speech" by 5 in the Mixed versus 3 in the Sessional, "increased interest in learning" by 3 versus 1. Since the number of the Mixed group was smaller the effect of these differences is slightly greater than at first appeared.

In answer to the question what was the best thing about preschool there were further signs of the mothers in the Mixed programs greater awareness of the components of learning. Eight of the mothers in the Mixed program mentioned learning attitudes "like sits and thinks, listens, attends, occupies himself more, actively involved", while only 3 sessional mothers did. On the other hand as many in each program gave formal learning (counting, recognising colours etc) as the best thing (3 in each).

When the mother is not informed of the reason why certain kinds of play activity and management are available to her child at preschool she does not so easily understand the nature of his learning. She is more impressed with the outward signs like being able to write his name or playing better. This is a satisfactory result but it is not necessarily one which the mother can build upon. However if she knows that he has learned to concentrate by having his interests encouraged and by positive reinforcement she has something to work on at home should she wish.

The interest generated by learning non academic things like songs and rhymes, which receives the highest ranking, suggests that mothers do not usually spend their own time doing this kind of thing. However they realise that it is an important part of childhood. One of the Mixed group mothers who had been unhappy about the way the two sessions had turned into a sort of playgroup told me that her older son had learned more songs with Home Base in 1978 than the one enrolled in the Mixed session. The teacher was the same one but she had found fewer opportunities in the general hassle of first term for including this type of activity in her Mixed sessions than she had in the weekly playgroups arranged with special care for the Home Base families. Since this was a problem of administration it was rectified. I am sure that the teacher did not realise the degree to which her emphasis had

changed and the mother did not want to hurt her feelings by telling her.

Teachers can get this type of feedback from mothers by designing checklists such as this for themselves. It is not as time consuming as individual interviews because the parents can take a sheet of paper home and fill it in bringing it back the next day. Also it is more objective allowing a non-threatening exchange of information.

There is another teacher-directed point to be made. I have claimed that mothers' descriptions of change in their children's behaviour can reflect the model which is provided by the behaviour of the teacher. There were striking differences in the four teachers whose work is discussed here. It is not surprising to me to find that the mothers in the teacher 4 group gave very few low ratings at all (the highest in 'communicates'). The exceptions were "more cooperative with adults" (girls low) and "expresses feelings" (girls low). This teacher placed a lot of cognitive emphasis in her program she has a competitive style, and the creative products which she and her aide displayed were quite impressive. It is possible that there were some costs in the more sensitive areas of interchange. One might be tempted to draw the opposite sort of conclusion from the responses of mothers in teacher 2 group were it not for the staff changes which confuse interpretations here.

Let us return to the mothers' point of view for one last consideration of the evaluation in term 2. When asked an open question, "what influences her in selecting the values she gives?", the mother may express the things closest to her heart, or she may be influenced by the context of the interview to give what she feels is the desired response. The latter is much less likely if given a number of chances to answer as was the case here.

In addition to several open questions we asked her for direct ratings. Differences among the groups of mothers in the way they handled the checklist, compared with the way they handled the open questions may have been due to several factors. I think that the checklist provides an opportunity for mothers to comment on issues which are not of primary importance to them but are nevertheless relevant. For example, the highest mean ratings for gains in "independence" were made by mothers of girls in the two Mixed groups and mothers of boys in the teacher 4 group; yet more Sessional mothers gave this response in answer to the open questions. It could be that the Mixed program does not stress independence to the same degree and yet achieves it. Or it could be that mothers who value "independence" most select the Sessional program and then discover other goals which had not been intended or expected. It is quite clear that the range of possibilities had widened by term 2 and preschool was being thought about differently than it had at the beginning of the year.

This point applies to their evaluation of the experience for themselves also. Some of the sessional mothers were claiming that preschool had helped them to be more patient with their children, to meet new friends and to be more understanding generally. I am sure that this had not been their expectation. Some of the mothers who might have expected these outcomes were satisfied that they had, but not all.

I think that there was insufficient clarification at the beginning of the year of the assumptions which underly parent involvement in early childhood education. Clearly the emphasis on their involvement came across as child centred, but it did not necessarily come across as a direct gain for them in their own lives. During the year the experience gained by the "veteran" Home Base teachers in previous years came through. Their manner to mothers was so accepting and supportive that mothers began to see their school involvement in a different light, not just for the child but for their own interest. Their ratings reflect the confusion of the first term and the anxieties which remained, but we can also see a greater awareness of the possibility of developing their own interests and of the opportunity to talk over problems.

Objectives reconsidered

Not many researchers attempt to adapt a course of intervention concurrently with enormous changes in the environment. It would have been wiser to postpone further experimentation with program styles until the whole school had settled down in its new environment. However time and the Education Department await for no man, where enrollments are concerned. The school bravely committed itself to ongoing parent involvement in the fullest sense possible and it could not be foretold in 1978 what effects material gains (i.e. new buildings) might have on the style of education offered in 1979. There was in fact a general tightening up of administration which was necessary to the administrators in the transition period but detrimental to experimentation. As an outsider restrained from playing the supportive and educative role I had hoped to play with pre-school teachers it was a painful experience, but not perhaps as painful as the participants found it. I have tried to let the data describe what happened and to interpret it from that point. The interpretation needs contextualisation.

In term 1, I witnessed some early enthusiasm for the program tempered by last minute reservations due partly to real pressures in organisation and partly to the fact that this was the first time that school administrators had been directly involved in the innovations. I have noted elsewhere (Annual Report, Mt. Druitt Early Childhood Project, 1978) that Home Base teachers preferred to remain a little detached from the school body while they were developing their new roles. While their need was real there was a danger in the detachment (1977 Report p.205). Ideally innovations come from the school itself. In the case of Bidwill the school was at first compliant but passively involved. In 1979 active involvement was required for the program's implementation but the necessary orientations had not taken place. New attitudes in teachers are achieved after a time exposure to new experiences. They are not instantaneous. It took about a year of relatively intensive effort to develop skills of home teachers to the level acquired in 1977. These teachers were able to operate their own program effectively in 1978. However, there were four new staff members at the beginning of 1979 (two teachers and two aides) and there was an additional staff change in term 2. It would have been too much to expect the veteran teachers to contribute a great deal to development of new staff unless they themselves believed that the objectives were being supported by the school as a whole. My own presence at times seemed to crystallise the difficulties and to increase the general anxiety.

The tension had some positive results and this indicated to me that the administrators were genuine in their wish to sponsor parent involvement in preschool, the primary goal. There have been some interesting developments not the least of which was the rapid professional growth of the newest teacher who took over group 2 in term 2. Another was the parent sponsored interest in the extensions of toy library services to handicapped children through teamwork with Youth and Community Resources personnel.

What has been demonstrated once again (Annual Report 1977 p.121/122) is that the original form of Home Base is not a popular selection for children in Mt. Druitt when other options are available. It tends to attract either the most competent and confident mothers or the other end of the scale, those who are aware that they need special assistance. They are more likely to be aware that their child needs special assistance, especially if he/she is handicapped in some way. They are less likely to be aware of the relevance of their own needs. This is why a home teaching service will not survive unless it is seen as an outreach or bridging experience between school and community. If a school wishes to mount this kind of outreach there are several different ways of doing it but the most successful in my view is one which begins at the level of the home and makes the transition to school a much more productive experience. The Mixed program seems to be an ideal way of doing this at this early stage. It needs more time to be tested out in a happier climate. If the mothers interest is engaged in the potential of the home environment, and in the related potential at school for interesting both the child and herself, there is a tremendous possibility for the prevention of later educational failure.

From our combined experience over four years it is clear that there are some families that do not have the necessary competence for even this level of school involvement due to pressures of illness or poverty or other disadvantaging circumstances. It is to these families that the efforts of a Home Base teacher should be directed. Her skill in interpreting the school's function in a new light can make a difference to the acceptance of education as relevant. However if such a service is too expensive the mixed program offers an acceptable alternative if it can retain some flexibility permitting parents more freedom of adaptation and more opportunities for interpretation by the teachers. Disadvantaged families might need, for instance, more home visits at the outset and a gradual introduction to school activities.

It would seem that the combination of two styles of program, Mixed and Sessional, in one school has the potential for providing a sound attitudinal basis for school learning, especially when the programs integrate for some purposes. Some of the administrative problems can be reduced by team teaching and resource sharing. New teachers would also gain from increased opportunities to observe alternative styles of obtaining the same objectives.

PLANNINGDOCUMENTS1. OBJECTIVES OF BIDWILL PRE-SCHOOL

These derive from Home Base objectives and their implementation for sessional attendance is outlined.

1. To increase the parents confidence in their roles as principal educators of their children by :-
 - a) strengthening in parents, their capacity for facilitating the development of their children (social, emotional, language, cognitive and physical).
 - b) involving parents directly in learning activities with the child.
2. To demonstrate that learning is a continuous process in home and school.
3. To identify, co-ordinate and integrate information about existing community resources for families.
4. To assist parents in increasing their knowledge and understanding of child growth and development.
5. To provide where possible appropriate diagnostic services for children and parents.
6. To provide group activities in which -
 - a) children learn to play and learn with one another.
 - b) parents have the opportunity to share their problems and learn from other parents.
7. To provide sessional experiences which may be daily or for 2 or 3 days per week. During sessions there will be activities during which parents will be given the opportunity to observe, acquire teaching skills and understand the learning potential embodied in each activity. Parents will be given support and reinforcement and guided towards an awareness that learning experiences are shared between school and home.
8. Extending the school into the community in ways which seem appropriate.

2. IMPLEMENTATION FOR SESSIONAL GROUPS

1. Invite mothers to attend sessions so that -
 - a) mother does not feel separated from her child.
 - b) mothers meet other community members.
 - c) mothers become involved in activities.

Mother is welcome to stay with the groups until she and the child feel comfortable and settled.

Mother is welcome to drop in at any time for informal contact with other mothers, teachers etc. This includes mothers and teachers with children in other grades.

2. There will be two types of continuity for Sessional families -
 - a) the curriculum shall include activities which fit naturally into the domestic/family routine.
 - b) sessional outcomes may be extended through home visits.
 - c) developmental possibilities of materials and toys available for borrowing from the Toy Library will be demonstrated by the teacher during sessions.
 - d) teachers will be willing and available to help mothers in the organization and running of a meaningful playgroup.
3. Knowledge of community resources available to families when the need arises.
4. Arrange films and talks on child development etc. Some of these may be scheduled at times when fathers can be incorporated and will also be directed through Community Network groups and social functions.
5. At regular intervals teachers will carry out an observation schedule to ensure individual assessment and progress. Referral to community resources will be applied if necessary - see 3.
6. Overlaps with "1" (above).
7. Curriculum and session plan.
 - a) there will be a range of activities many of which will be specifically planned to invite parent participation.
 - b) parents will be asked to take part and lead under direction - teacher will explain objectives and learning experiences to be gained from activities. Opportunity will be given for parents to use their own individual skills as part of the curriculum and at times may be asked to quietly observe or monitor children allowing children time to be alone.
 - c) teachers recognise growth of parent as teacher.
8. Home-base teachers undertake home/school liaison for individual families at other grade levels, if required.

3. ORGANISATION OF PRE-SCHOOL 1979 - RATIONALE

Parent Expectations:

In the Australian context most parents have a concept of pre-school which is based on the dual notions of socialisation for the child and time off for mother. The idea of being involved in their own children's education is a relatively new one, especially in areas in which parents feel inadequate as students themselves. They fear that children will not learn unless they are in the hands of experts.

Sessional Preschool:

While meeting the socialisation requirements of children the mothers desire for some time off from mothering is only partially fulfilled because the sessions occupy only half a day and the parent is required to bring her child to school and to pick him up often after a long walk. The daily attendance also robs her of opportunities to visit relatives or places of interest, or even to do a full day's shopping. If she is required to participate in classroom activities this reduces her time to herself even further. However, this is the popular choice of parents whose children are very active, and paradoxically, socially well developed. It is not the popular choice of the parent whose child is in need of socialisation. Such a parent is often fearful of how he will behave in school.

Obviously full time attendance (i.e. one half day every day) is desirable as a means of providing stimulation towards cognitive and general development, but the parents' participation is even more valuable for lasting effects throughout school. It seems that since educators have by and large influenced parents in separating their caretaking functions from teaching functions, the onus is on educators to repair this flaw in school and community relations.

Part-Sessional, part Home teaching:

In nearly three years of experience in working with mothers Home Base teachers have been aware that many would be happy to choose some participation in preschool sessions providing they could retain some time to spend with their own children since they find it hard to move outside the isolated Mt. Druitt environment in only half a day. The Bidwill parents have experienced a home-teaching model and enjoyed the close liaison this has given them with the school and the enjoyment it has provided for them. Many have commented on the awareness they have gained on their children's development and the contribution they, as parents, make towards it. Most of these parents enjoy the group activities both for themselves and their children and would like to see these extended. However they have not entirely overcome their expectation that once a building is there a "proper" preschool results. Like teachers they expect that one pattern will exist for all, and they have not yet reached the status of initiators of educational ideas or practices. Approximately one quarter of enrolling parents who have been interviewed at this stage request a mixed sessional and home-teaching preschool service but it is likely that others who do not understand the nature of the alternatives may choose the mixed model when presented with this opportunity.

Full-time Home Base:

It is the experience of the Home Base teachers that the minority of parents are prepared to forego group activities on a regular basis. However there are small numbers of parents requesting home teaching alone, either because they enjoy having their children's company at home but wish to enlarge the scope of their activities, or else because they are fearful that their child is not ready for school experiences. In the latter case the Home Base teacher would encourage the gradual participation of the child in small group and then Sessional activities. Thus the teacher's role is one of gaining the confidence of such mothers in order that the confidence may enhance the child's school changes. It is a role requiring sensitivity to needs of different families and a sense of timing for the transfer of the family to school experiences.

4. USE OF FACILITIES.

1. Full Sessional activities are likely to occupy one complete unit and one half of the time of unit 2. (60 children).
2. One half of the time unit 2 will be used for part time Sessional children. (40 children, 2 sessions each per week).
3. Unit 3 will be used flexibly in the following ways:
 - (a) mother and child groups for part-time Sessional families (2 to 3 groups per week),
 - (b) mother and child group for full-time Home Base families (15),
 - (c) play groups for families with young children not ready for preschool. This is seen as an early outreach into the community to bring in mothers not known to the school and often isolated through lack of community contacts. Three such playgroups could be organised with some assistance from Home Base teachers. Their experience is that parent organisation requires some indirect guidance if playgroups are to function effectively,
 - (d) toy library already run by Bidwill parents,
 - (e) parent workshops, films and special study groups.

Thus 115 children will be enrolled and many more families will have this opportunity of receiving teacher guidance. This plan is based on the use of 3 Home Base and 2 Session based teachers plus 14 aides for assistance with full-time children. All Home Base teachers will use non Sessional time for visiting, leading parent groups and assisting in all aspects of school community relations.

5. TEACHER DUTIESSession based teachers

- Teacher 1 - responsible for administration of unit 1, with assistance of one aide.

Teacher 2 - responsible for 20 full time enrolments in unit 2 and for providing a consistent environment for part timers. She will require some assistance from an aide for full time sessions but will assist Home Base teachers 1 and 2 during part-time sessions. Thus she will learn the nature of parent involvement and home teaching on the job.

Home Base teachers

Teachers 1 and 2 will be responsible for 20 part-time sessional and Home Base families each and will be present during sessions. They will visit these families once per fortnight and arrange group activities which involve mothers at the school (Unit 3). Teacher 3 will be responsible for full-time Home Base families and their group activities (Unit 3) and will act as an advisor to play groups.

This gives the home base teachers a fairly heavy load and it would be desirable to have a fourth teacher to assist in the group work since home visiting is time consuming. It is also hoped that such a teacher could train mothers for leadership within the school so that some of the functions of the present Home Base teachers would be carried by parent co-ordinators eventually.

EVALUATION DOCUMENTS

BIDWILL PRESCHOOL ADMISSION INFORMATION

Name of child Mother's name

Program selection

Reason for program selection

.....

Do you think preschool should -

- . teach things like numbers and new words
- . prepare child to get along at school
- . help him to get used to being away from mother
- . teach him to concentrate
- . help sort out any problems
- . give more attention than he has now
- . improve his behaviour
- . help me to understand him better
- . help me to learn how to teach him better at home
- . give me a chance to have a rest from being with him all the time
.....
- . be fun
- . make him confident in himself

Do you think all children should go to preschool?

why?

.....

Are you happy about the parent involvement program here?

If not, why?

.....

Parent Impressions of Pre-school

Name of child _____ Name of mother _____

Teacher's Name _____

1. Is _____ in the same group as he/she started?

Changed to _____

Reason for change _____

2. Does _____ attend regularly? _____

Reason for absence _____

3. Does she/he enjoy pre-school? _____

If not, why? _____

4. How much do you think she/he has developed during the year?

1) very much 2) quite a lot 3) Not at all

In what ways have you seen him/her change?

5. What are the best things that have happened to _____ because he/she has started pre-school?

6. What are the worst things?

Do you remember when you first brought your child to pre-school we asked you what your expectations were?

Do you feel they have been achieved? _____

	No	A little	quite a bit	a lot	very much
8. Has pre-school helped your child					
. to recognise colours and shapes					
. to become more independent					
. to concentrate on and finish what he/she is doing					
. to be more co-operative with adults					
. play imaginatively, play make-believe games					
. to communicate clearly					
. to count					
. to learn new words					
. make friends with other children					
. talk about how she/he feels					
. to learn songs or rhymes					
9. Has your child's going to pre-school helped you					
. to understand the child more					
. be more patient with the child					
. to have more time					
. have an interest outside the home					
. sort out any problems					
. to meet few friends					
. to feel you have something to contribute at school					
. to have more understanding of others					